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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7394
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000057

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [CG](#)

SUBJECT: MONUC'S Kivus Conference sitrep report #8;
Day 5 (January 13, 2008)

REF: (A) Kinshasa 0040; (B) Kinshasa 0046

Note: The following report was prepared by MONUC (pls protect) and was shared with U.S. team in Goma. Reftels are previous installments in this series. End note.

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¶1. (U) Summary: South Kivu Communities finished their presentations. North Kivu armed groups starting with CNDP take the floor in this fifth day of plenary sessions. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) After the extremist speeches from yesterday, particularly directed against the Banyamulenge by the Bembe and Fulero, the day started with the declarations of the remaining communities of South Kivu, whose delegates, although determined and swift in their messages, adopted a more moderate tone for their deliberations. The presentations of the Barundi, Shi, Tembo and Vira communities however reiterated some of the main points that were made yesterday by other South Kivu Communities, including the under representation of their groups in the provincial administration, the insecurity caused by foreign armed groups and the demand to strengthen customary rights for the indigenous communities.

¶3. (SBU) The speech delivered by a female representative of the Shi Community which represents the ethnic majority in the Bukavu area, was not only well received, because it was the first declaration delivered by a woman, but also because it did not target any specific communities, but addressed all Congolese people. In an emotional closure, the speaker called upon all communities to ask their children to follow the path of peace and to be forewarned that such a peace would not come free and without compromise. Only after the speech was delivered, did it become clear that it had been drafted by Vital Kamerhe and Marcelin Chishambo, Special Advisor to President Kabila, both of them members of the Shi community.

¶4. (SBU) This reconciliatory tone also marked today's moderation by Vital Kamerhe. Between the long and eagerly awaited declarations of the North Kivu armed groups, Kamerhe pointed out aspects of consent between the groups, rather than elaborating on the many aspects of dissent. Moreover, he allowed representatives to speak un-interrupted and to exceed the time limits of 15 minutes as has been the practice of all moderators since the beginning of the conference.

¶5. (SBU) Some of the commonalities between the armed groups included their criticism of the GDRC for various reasons, mostly for not honoring its responsibilities to protect the Congolese people, its failure to safeguard national and territorial integrity, its incapacity to foster an effective and inclusive security sector reform and its discrimination against one or the other ethnic group.

¶6. (SBU) The head of the CNDP delegation Kambaru declared his group's genuine ambition for peace. He claimed that the CNDP is not a group with only ethnically oriented objectives and that its members are patriots and nationalists in the "noblest sense of the words". To make peace sustainable, however, he called upon the GoDRC to abolish its discrimination of Tutsi, particularly in the FARDC, and to stop its support for the Mayi-Mayi and PARECO armed groups. He warned that because of its unwillingness to effectively deal with the FDLR, the GoDRC's popularity is decreasing, and that legitimacy gained through elections "is not perennial and needs to be earned in the eyes of citizens on a daily basis".

¶7. (SBU) The delegate admitted that the CNDP leadership had to make some controversial decisions in the past such as the taking of Bukavu in 2004. However, he emphasized that his leadership was not given a choice, facing the obvious alliance between the FARDC and the FDLR, insisting that this alliance must have been built with the consent of the highest authorities.

¶8. (SBU) The CNDP delegate asked the GoDRC to (a) address the problems of FDLR, LRA, ADF-NALU and FNL; (b) allow for the return of Jean-Pierre Bemba as the legitimate leader of the opposition; (c) grant all IDPs and refugees their right to return to their communities; (d) implement the Nairobi Accords; (e) withdraw all arrest warrants against CNDP leaders as well as the release of political prisoners; (f) re-establish a Truth and Reconciliation Commission with proper resources and (g) not to hand Congolese citizens over to international courts.

¶9. (SBU) The delegate of the PARECO armed group picked up the legitimacy issue raised by the CNDP, declaring that the period of

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"1+4" was past -- a hint that might have been directed to Azarias Ruberwa who was sitting in the front row of the auditorium -- and that the minority had to accept to be governed by the majority. At the same time, PARECO urged the GoDRC to effectively eliminate the FDLR problem and not to longer allow the International Community to turn a blind eye to massacres committed against Congolese people. The delegate warned that his group will not cease to exist as long as the GoDRC proves unable to stop Rwandan infiltration across the border into the DRC. Finally, he called upon the International Community to denounce the alleged presence of Rwandan troops in North Kivu and demanded, as previously many of the communities, an inter-Rwandan dialogue.

¶10. (SBU) Similar to the communities of North and South Kivu, of which many had demanded stronger representation in provincial and national administrative and government institutions, all armed groups demanded a stronger representation in the FARDC. The CNDP declared that the brassage was a failure and asked, how a strong national army can be built if Tutsi are being discriminated at entering the national forces. The PARECO delegate demanded the inclusion of Mayi-Mayi and PARECO officers into the higher leadership of the 8th and 10th Military Region, and criticized the results of the mixage. Representatives of the three Mayi-Mayi groups that spoke in today's plenary denounced the group's under representation in military and civilian institutions, complaining "that even the Tutsi" were not as marginalized as his group.

¶11. (SBU) Although the groups had some similar ideas about potential ways to peace, some aspects evolved which could prove as serious stumbling blocks. While PARECO called for an international court to investigate war crimes, the CNDP claimed that international justice is incompatible with state sovereignty. Moreover, PARECO and Mayi-Mayi demanded a brassage in which the CNDP would be removed from North Kivu, a position that the CNDP is unlikely to agree to. Finally, the call for an inter-Rwandan dialogue by the Mayi-Mayi and PARECO and the claim that the problems in North Kivu are rooted in Rwanda, is hardly shared by the CNDP.

¶12. (SBU) The overall tone of the declarations by the armed groups was nonetheless conciliatory and, apart from some mostly oblique verbal attacks on other armed groups, moderate. Although being

enemies on the battle field, the delegate of the Mayi-Mayi and the delegate of the CNDP shook hands when handing over the podium. Despite the long presentations -- some of them lasted as long as an hour instead of the planned 15 minutes -- the auditorium remained attentive and engaged and actively responded to the delegates' presentations.

¶13. (SBU) At the end of today's proceedings, the Executive Secretary of the Communauté Economique des Pays des Grands Lacs

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(Economic Community of the Great Lakes) spoke to the audience, offering to the DRC to effectively re-enter the body that is normally comprised of Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC, which never joined the body at its re-opening after it had been dislodged in the early 1990's.

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